

FURTHER ADDITIONAL FAUNA OF THE COMBOYNE PLATEAU,
1926-1928.

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In my two previous papers I dealt with the fauna of the Comboyne Plateau, (Vol. iv., Part ii., and Vol. iv., Part v.), from 1923-26. In this paper I continue my observations to 1928. I have made a fairly comprehensive survey of the district, which is fast losing its former beauty, being nearly all cleared for farming. The opportunity to record its original fauna will never recur.

INVERTEBRATA.

INSECTA—ODONATA.

Austroplebia costalis. This handsome dragon-fly was only seen once.

ORTHOPTERA.

Archimantis latistylus. Not very common.

Caedicia olivacea. Very plentiful, especially seen about garden plants.

Extatosoma tiaratum. Rare.

Acrophylla (Vetilia) titan. Rare.

Anostostoma erinaceus. Found about decaying wood, but not often seen.

HEMIPTERA.

Scutiphora pedicellata. Not common.

Eurymcloides pulchra. Common on eucalypt saplings, attended by a small black ant, attracted by a sweet secretion produced by the insect.

COLEOPTERA.

Ceratoferonia phylarchus. Plentiful and found under decaying logs on the ground.

Hyperion schroetteri. Found under logs and occasionally flying into the house at night, attracted by light.

Rhantus punctatus. Only seen once.

Macrogyrus oblongus. One of the common water beetles, and seen in colonies on the creeks.

Aulonogyrus strigosus. Not so plentiful as the last and about half its size, measuring only about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in length.

Leis conformis. Not very plentiful here, and of great value on account of its feeding on aphid; cleaning up the woolly aphid on the apple trees here.

Coccinella repanda. A much commoner form than the last.

Verania frenata. Only occasionally seen. Two other unidentified forms I have noticed attacking the rose aphid—one of a canary yellow with two broad wavy transverse black bands across the elytra, and a central black spot at the tail end. The other is biscuit coloured, with black bordered elytra and a transverse row of three black spots on each elytron, making a continuous line of spots about the centre. The larvae, as well as the adults, feed on the aphid, and clear up an infested plant very quickly.

Ophidius histrio. Occasionally seen on flowers in the garden.

Diphucephala aurulenta. Found occasionally on flowers.

Phyllotocus macleayi. Found in swarms on flowers in early summer and doing an immense amount of damage.

Phyllotocus marginipennis. Appears in swarms and is very destructive to garden flowers.

Eupoecila australasiae. Found several times on garden flowers.

Diaphonia dorsalis. Very active and seen frequently flying around and alighting on a flower.

Rhoepa marginicornis. In the early summer evenings appears here in loud humming swarms, and attacks flowers and foliage.

Scitula pruinosa. Appearing in swarms on summer evenings, doing a lot of damage to foliage.

Schizorrhina atropunctata. Rare.

Paropsis reticulata. Uncommon.

Paropsis liturati. Rare.

Aulacophora hilaris. Often seen.

Leptos gladiator. Comparatively plentiful. I have found it mostly on a mistletoe (*Phrygilanthus celastroides*).

HYMENOPTERA.

Myrmecia forficata. A soldier ant not seen on the basalt, but at the edges of the Plateau on sedimentary strata.

Myrmecia pyriformis. Also seen only at the edges of the Plateau.

Leptomyrmech erythrocephalus. Rather uncommon, and found on the basalt or mixed strata.

Scolia soror. Very plentiful in the summer months, feeding on the nectar of certain flowers. The cocoon is frequently ploughed up from the ground. It is a long oval, made of parchment-like material.

DIPTERA.

Plusiomyia gracilis. Fairly common during the summer months, and resting in shady places in the day time.

Scaptia pulchra. Only seen once.

Scaptia xanthopilis. Also rare.

Trichophthalma obscura. Not plentiful.

Asilus ferrugineiventris. Very plentiful.

Blepharotes splendidissimus. This is uncommon.

Sciapus pachygyna. Plentiful.

Xanthogramma grandicorne. Rare.

Sarcophaga tryoni. A species seen frequently on flowers and fairly common.

Rutilia (inornata?). Seen rarely.

SIPHONAPTERA.

Pulex irritans. The common flea is very prevalent on the basalt.

LEPIDOPTERA—RHOPALOCERA.

Danaida hamata. Locally rare; seen twice in early February this year.

Danaida affinis. This still rarer form I was fortunate to see twice this year, in January and March.

Hypolimnias nerina. Seen this year for the first time; many examples of both male and female seen in February and March.

Miletus delicia. Very rare here. I only saw it once: in early January this year.

Huphina scyllaria. Rare, seen once.

Catopsilia pomona. This year (1928) none were seen, but they were plentiful in January and February, 1927, the first and only time noticed here. Although they were flying across the garden all day, I never saw one settle on the flowers, in contrast to *C. gorgophone* and *C. pyranthe*, which frequently settled on them. I also had *Cassia sophera* growing there, which *C. pyranthe* frequently made use of for laying its eggs, but it apparently had no attraction for *C. pomona*.

Hesperilla picta. Occasionally seen in the brush.

Padraona flavovittata. Fairly plentiful and often seen on garden flowers.

Cephenes sperthias. The Palm Skipper. I expressed a doubt about seeing this form in my first paper (*Aust. Zool.*, iv., 1925, 59), but have since identified it. It is not often seen.

Euschemon rafflesia. Only seen once, in the month of January. It appears to be a rare form here, though its food plant *Wilkiea macrophylla* is plentiful.

LEPIDOPTERA—HETEROCERA.

Theretra latreillei. The larva feeds on *Colocasia macrorrhiza* (Cungevoi lily). Seen in February and March, but not plentiful.

Theretra oldenlandiae. I mentioned this in my first paper with a slight doubt about its identity, but have since verified its occurrence. It is uncommon. One of the food plants is the cultivated grape. Seen in February and March.

Theretra nessus. Only one seen, which I caught while feeding on nectar from *Penstemon* flowers.

Macroglossus errans. This is a comparatively rare species here, as I have only seen it a few times. It is extremely shy and difficult to take, and very quick in its movements.

Hippotion scrofa. Mentioned in my first paper (p. 60) under the name of *Chaerocampa scrofa*. Occurs here in two forms, with varying degrees of intermediate colouring between them. I have seen this species flying and feeding in bright sunlight, as also *H. celerio* and *Chromis erotus*.

Ardices curvata. Seen occasionally.

Chalciope hyppasia. Seen occasionally.

Plusia argentifera. Flies to light. Seen on summer evenings.

Plusia chalcites. Also flies to light. Feeds on tomato, potato, and other *Solenaceae*.

Phalaenoides tristifica. A rare moth here.

Cruria donovani. Occasionally seen. Both these last are day flying, the former feeding in the larval stage on *Epilobium glabellum*.

Cosmodes elegans. Frequently flies to light.

Anthela acuta. Occasionally seen as it flies in to the light.

Entometa australasiae. This species, the larva of which feeds on various species of *Acacia*, to which it does a considerable amount of damage, displays protective mimicry of a high order, especially in the larval stage. It is then with difficulty distinguished from the bark of the limbs upon which it lies, being of exactly the same colour. The moth itself also closely resembles a dried leaf. It is a night feeder in the larval stage.

Zenkenia recurvata. A small moth, flying by day, and found often on garden flowers.

VERTEBRATA.

REPTILIA—OPHIDIA.

Pseudelaps krefftii. A small snake found under logs and stones, two or three of which have come under my notice. The average length of those I have seen is about 14 inches.

LACERTILIA.

Lialis burtoni. A slow worm of nocturnal habit, and fairly common about rocky situations at the edge of the Plateau. It feeds on small insects.

Gymnodactylus platurus. I mentioned this in my second paper (p. 297) with a doubt as to its species. This has now been confirmed as definitely *platurus*.

AMPHIBIA.

Hyla gracilentata. Occasionally seen.

AVES.

Elanus axillaris. Black Shouldered Kite. This is rare here; I saw it only on one occasion in March, 1927.

Orthonyx temmincki. Spine-tailed Logrunner. Has in the past been fairly

plentiful, hut owing to the destruction of the brushes, many have been destroyed, and others hunted away to more remote brushes. I had been on the look-out for this bird for a long time, and was rewarded last year in seeing a pair. It is a noisy bird when disturbed. It lives on the ground in the thick brushes.

Cinclorhampus cruralis. Brown Song Lark. Only one bird seen.

Stomiopera unicolor. White-gaped Honeyeater. This species was seen once by me in my garden at close quarters. I saw it first settle about 60 yards away, and was puzzled as to its species, though I guessed it to be a honeyeater from its flight and shape. It finally flew on to a *buddleia* blossom, within 17 feet of me (measured distance), and remained there in an exposed position long enough for me to study it thoroughly. I had the field glasses on it in the first instance. Two outstanding features about it were its conspicuously white gape, and the other its uniformly grey colour. I recognised that it was a new species to me. The only species with a conspicuous white or pale yellow gape known to me is *Meliphaga lewini*, the common honeyeater of the brushes, and known to me for over 40 years. I immediately consulted authorities, and found that *Stomiopera unicolor* fitted it exactly in description. A few weeks after this I looked *S. unicolor* up and handled it at the Australian Museum, and recognised the bird I had seen here at once. I am giving these details in full, for I am fully aware that my statement may be doubted. It would seem extremely improbable that a bird whose known habitat is in the gulf country of Queensland and the extreme north of Australia, about 1,000 miles distant, would be seen so far south. This bird was seen by me on February 2, 1927. It was solitary.

Carduelis elegans. The English Goldfinch. In my second paper (*Aust. Zool.*, iv., 1926, 295) I stated that this bird was reported as having been seen, but that I had not met with it personally. The record is now verified, as I saw a pair two or three times in May this year in my garden. This and the starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*, are the only two introduced birds here, *Passer domesticus*, House Sparrow, not having made its appearance to this date (July, 1928).

MAMMALIA—MARSUPIALIA.

Acrobates pygmaeus. Flying Mouse or Feather-tail. I mentioned this as occurring here in my first paper (*Aust. Zool.*, iv., 1925, 72). Lately I had a dead specimen sent to me which had been killed after the tree in which it had its home had been felled. This animal measured $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in total length, of which the head and body were 3 inches, and the tail $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch. It weighed $\frac{3}{8}$ th of an ounce. The general colour is blue-grey above and creamy white beneath. Tail flattened, edged with long hairs, giving it the appearance of a feather, hence one of its vernacular names. The tail is almost devoid of hair underneath. The anterior half of the ear is grey, the posterior half being white, with a black mark in front of the eyes. The width of the body, which is considerably flattened, was one inch, and with the flying membrane $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch when at rest.

CHEIROPTERA.

Nyctophilus timoriensis. Prohahly fairly common.

My thanks are due to Dr. C. Anderson and members of the staff of the Australian Museum, to Dr. G. A. Waterhouse and Mr. George Lyell, Dr. Mackerras and the late Dr. E. W. Ferguson for the identification of many forms.

ERRATUM. In my second paper, "Additional Fauna of the Comboyne Plateau" (*Aust. Zool.*, iv., 1926, 295-8), p. 297, line 5 from the bottom, read "Canines" for "Cavities."